



United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Fort Hall Agency  
P.O. Box 220  
Fort Hall, Idaho 83203-0220



In Reply Refer To:  
Administration

February 28, 2011

Mr. Nathan Small, Tribal Chairman  
Fort Hall Business Council  
P O Box 306  
Fort Hall, Id 83203

Dear Chairman Small,


On behalf of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Fort Hall Agency this letter offers our support for the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes' efforts to clarify the status of Rights of Way over Tribal and other Indian-owned lands within the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. Prior to and during the meetings with the Tribal and Qwest communications representatives on February 16, 2011 we reported that there are a number of concerns that must be resolved with regard to the installation of fiber optic lines within the Reservation boundaries. Among the concerns are the lack of documentation, including land owner consents, proper recording and the lack of quality service for certain corridors where fiber optic lines have been installed.

We offer our staff time to work with the Tribe and telecommunications companies to assure that proper access and documentation of the rights of way are completed.

The Fort Hall Indian Reservation remains underserved, with most areas of the 544,000 acres of the Reservation without internet and cell phone service; we also understand that emergency services cannot communicate by cell phone or satellite service in the mountainous areas of the Reservation. The BIA at the Fort Hall Agency supports the Tribal efforts to assure that all Tribal lands and Tribal members have the opportunity to access telecommunication and information services.

We certainly support the Tribal efforts to promote the best interests of the Tribal and Reservation residents.

Sincerely,

  
Dean Fox, Superintendent  
Fort Hall Agency

DF:ld

cc: BIA Realty  
BIA Technical Services  
files

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